

(b) the number of life saving medicines out of them along with the extent of price reduced;

(c) by when the target of providing free medicines to the poor people would be achieved;

(d) whether Government have identified the areas for this purpose; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) to (e) Pharma companies have agreed to voluntarily restrict the trade margins for generic medicines to 15% for wholesalers and 35% for retailers. A compilation of the list of 886 such medicines, whose prices have been voluntarily reduced by 11 companies as a result of this cap on trade margins has been brought out. The list is available on this Department's website www.chemicals.gov.in. Copies of the list have also been placed in the Parliament Library. It covers formulations in all dosage forms such as tablets, capsules and syrups, etc. which find usage in the treatment of a large number of diseases. The medicines covered are anti-diabetics, antibiotics, cough syrups, painkillers as well as those used during the surgical operations, for the cure of the infectious diseases and for the treatment of hypertension etc. The voluntary reduction in prices of these medicines ranges between 0.26% and 74.53%.

A Draft Cabinet Note on National Pharmaceutical Policy, 2006 is under finalisation. In this Policy some of the schemes for providing free medicines to the poor are National Health Insurance Policy for the BPL families; Larger allocation to be made for National Illness Assistance Fund/State Illness Assistance Funds; District Illness Assistance Fund to be set up; Revolving Funds for BPL families to be set up; States would also be asked to set up revolving funds in all the government hospitals for free treatment of BPL families; Rajasthan model of Medicare Relief Societies to be replicated in all the States in the form of Drug Banks.

Policy of Stage-III of New Pricing Scheme

1070. SHRI SUDARSHAN AKARAPU: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

[1 December, 2006]

RAJYA SABHA

(a) whether the working group constituted to formulate a policy for Stage-III of New Pricing Scheme (NPS) has submitted its report;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the recommendations of the working group have been accepted by the Cabinet; and

(d) the time-frame by which the policy for Stage-III of NPS would come into effect?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) to (d) The Working Group, constituted to review the effectiveness of Stage-I and II of New Pricing Scheme (NPS) for urea units and to formulate a policy for Stage-III of NPS has submitted its report, which is under examination/consideration of the Government with a view to formulate policy for Stage-III of NPS.

Attempts to make essential medicines at affordable prices

1071. SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any attempt to make unbranded generic drugs and branded drugs more affordable to consumer;

(b) if so, the details thereof including the attempt to make branded drugs affordable as on today;

(c) if so, the total amount of drugs in branded drugs and unbranded generic drugs sold for last three years, year-wise, State-wise and category wise;

(d) the steps taken in details to comply hon'ble Supreme Court order to make available essential medicines to poor with affordable prices; and

(e) whether there is any attempt to enlist essential drugs and control the prices of essential drugs as directed by Hathi Commission repoi?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) to (e) The 74 bulk drugs specified in the First Schedule of the Drugs (Prices Control) Order, 1995 (DPCO, 95) and the formulations based thereon are under price control